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Community Action

for HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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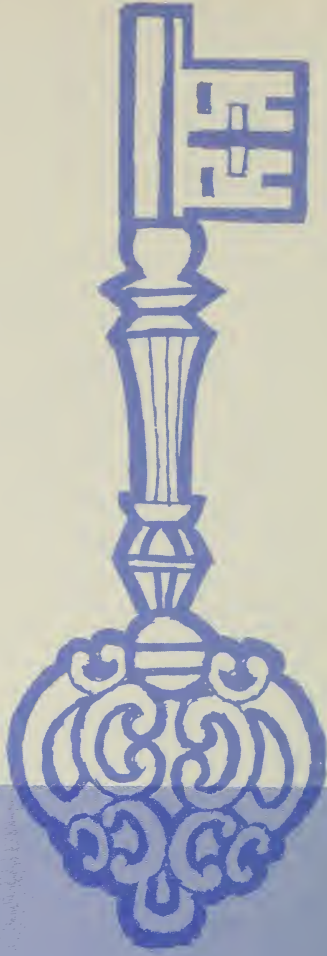
FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Community Action is the

Key to Human Resource Development!

Your community holds the key to its future—the development of its people and their resources to their fullest potential. The two go hand in hand. Without the development of individual abilities and group leadership, present and potential economic resources cannot be fully developed. Without the development of job opportunities, human resources are wasted.





The key to such development is community action—local people working together to identify their problems and to develop ways of solving them. The result of such action is:

- education for all the people
- job training for youth and adults
- adequate public facilities
- better health
- higher agricultural incomes
- employment in industries
- better communities in which to live
- greater opportunity for the future

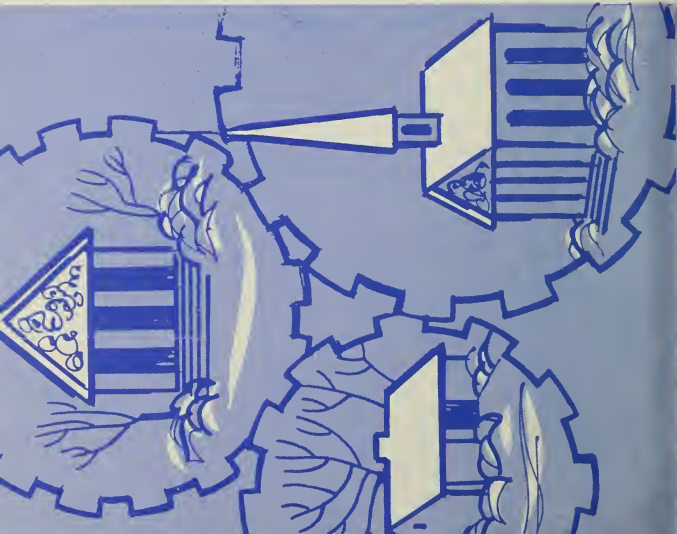
A Major Need—To Eliminate Poverty

A major need in human resource development is to help the poor lift themselves out of poverty and its crippling environment. Roughly half of the poverty in America is in rural areas. And people living in poverty have little to offer their families and communities. Poverty stems from many causes—poor education, ill health, lack of job skills, unemployment, and underemployment to name a few. In total, it means wasted human resources and despair for those caught in its web. Its cost to society is high—school dropouts, delinquency and crime, sickness and disease, and swelling welfare rolls.

Community action is needed to get at the roots of poverty and break its vicious cycle—to help the poor help themselves!

Community Action Programs

The Economic Opportunity Act passed by Congress in 1964 provides a variety of programs to assist low-income people. One major part of the Act provides financial and technical assistance for local Community Action Programs.

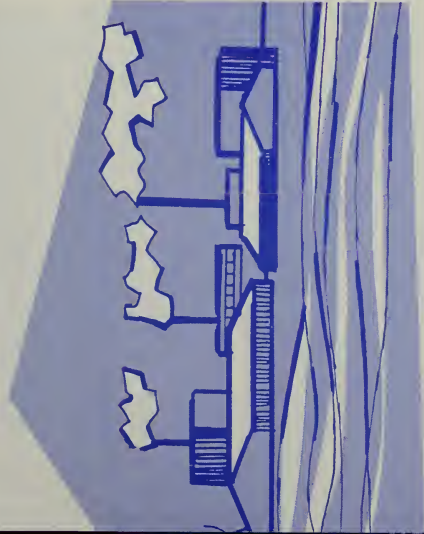


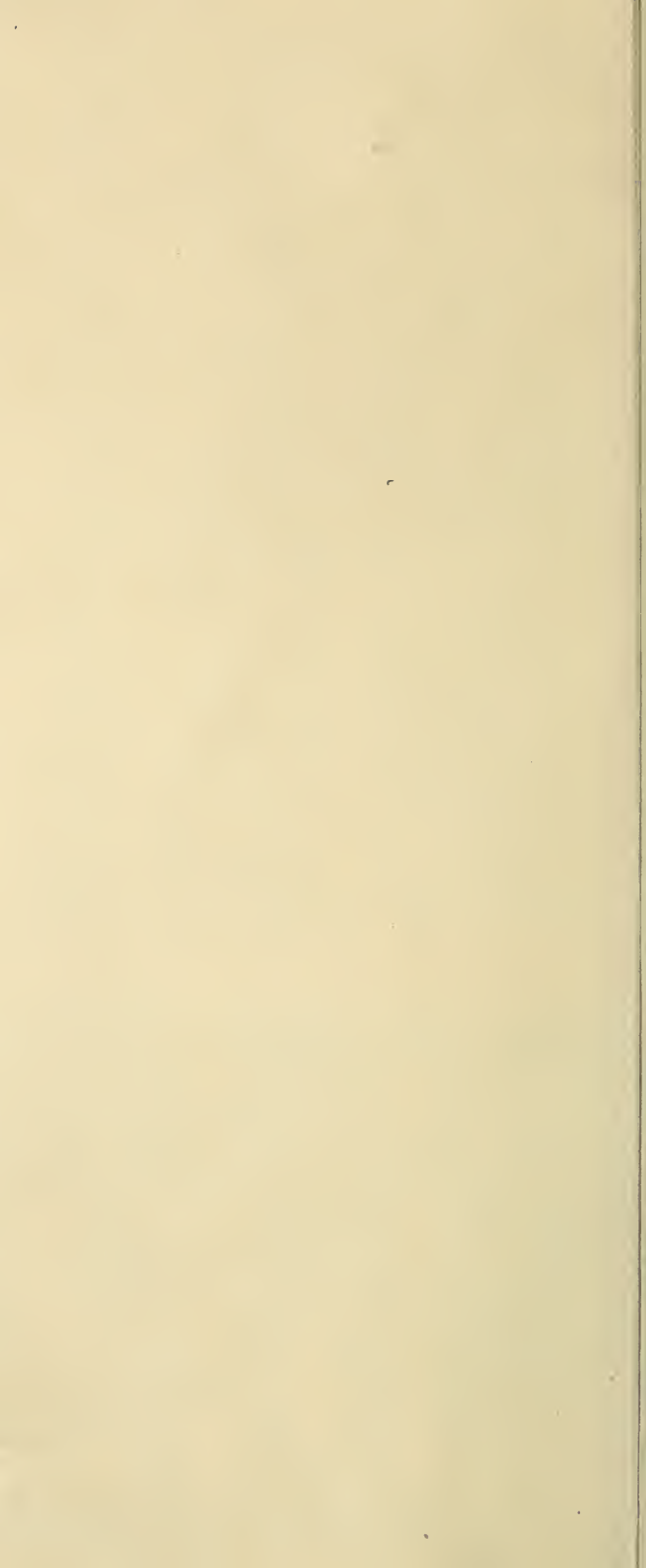
Individual communities decide how best to combat poverty in their area and develop ways to do it. The Federal government pays the major share of costs.

The prime purpose of Community Action Programs is to mobilize and utilize all the resources—private and public—that local communities can bring to bear in eliminating the causes of poverty. In the past, many efforts of various groups failed to achieve their goals because they were not *geared in* with other programs.

How Can Community Action Programs Help?

Communities can develop a variety of services to alleviate poverty through Community Action Programs. Some examples are literacy courses, remedial reading, preschool training and day-care centers, employment counseling, housing, job training, leadership development, home management training, health improvement, and vocational rehabilitation. Both youth and adults can be helped to develop their full potential. Community Action Programs can sponsor work-training and work-study projects for





youth, special training for welfare recipients and migrant workers, and a host of other activities. The major aim is human resource development—backed up by new job opportunities—to help people attain self-sufficiency.

How Can We Start a Community Action Program?

The success of a Community Action Program, like any public effort, depends upon how well people understand and support it. Thus, the first step is to acquaint local leaders and the public with poverty in your area. This is one of the surest ways to arouse interest in doing something about it.

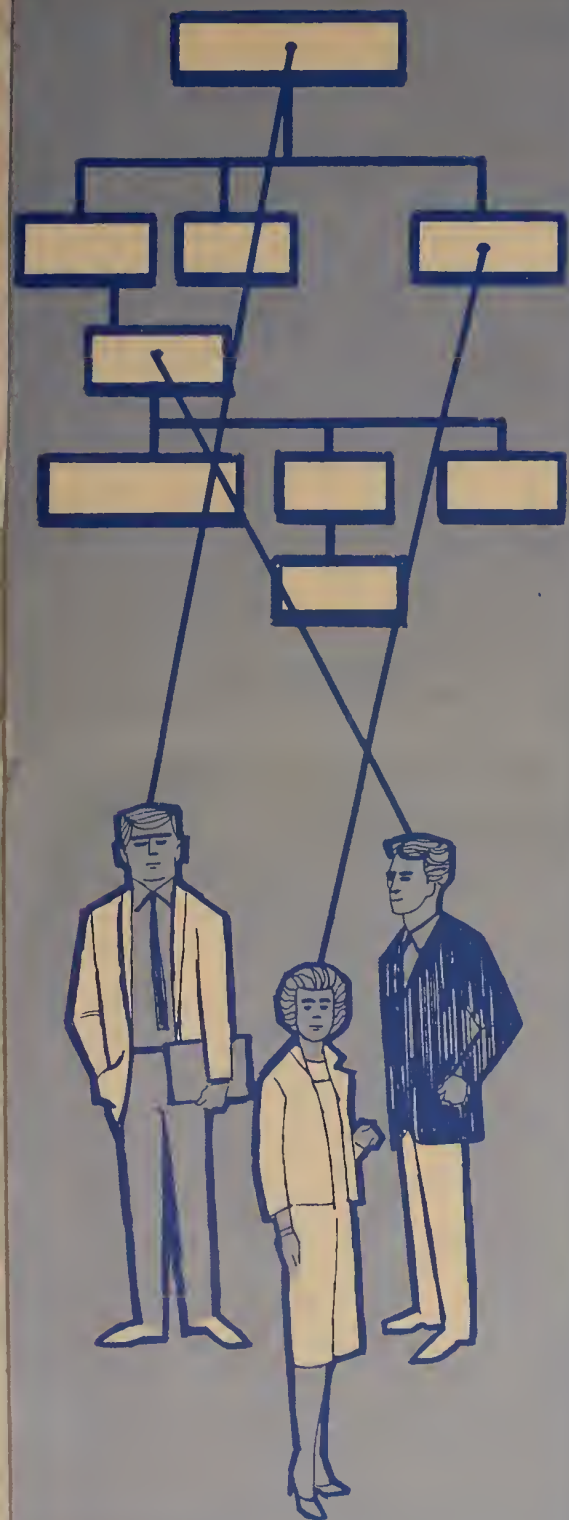
Invite some community leaders to tour your “blighted” areas, to visit those living “across the tracks,” to observe the number and living conditions of low-income families scattered throughout your rural areas.

Encourage your newspaper editor to publish a series of articles depicting local poverty conditions. Visit ministers, teachers, welfare workers, and other community leaders to discuss the situation. Encourage frank and open discussion among community groups and the public about poverty problems and what can be done about them. Involve the poor in these discussions.

Use every method that will arouse interest and create a community spirit for attacking the problems. With interest aroused—invite representatives of public and private agencies serving the community to discuss their role and contribution. Invite representatives of agencies and organizations serving the poor to participate. Develop consensus among interested groups on how best to organize and plan Community Action Programs.

Who Can Sponsor Community Action Programs?

A public agency or a private nonprofit incorporated organization can sponsor Community Action Programs at the *local, county, or area* level. Two or more sparsely-populated rural counties might join forces for a more effective program. Either established organizations or newly-formed ones can serve as sponsors. *Rural Areas Development* committees might well take the leadership in sponsoring Community Action Programs in rural areas. Established organizations may have to be modified in order to be broadly representative of the areas and people to be served and to focus attention on anti-poverty programs.



Kinds of Sponsoring Organizations

The three kinds of sponsorship for Community Action Programs are:

- Local government with policy advisory committee from all interested groups.
- Nonprofit corporation with large board of directors and strong executive committee.
- Nonprofit corporation with small administrative board of directors and broadly-representative policy advisory committee.

Membership of the sponsoring organization should be broadly representative of the areas and the people to be served:

The CAP sponsoring organization should involve representatives of public and private agencies serving the community. It should include at least one representative of each of the following: the chief elected official or officials in the community, the board of education, the public welfare



agency, and the major private social service agencies. The sponsoring organization also should include leaders from important elements in the community such as labor, business, farm, religious, women and youth organizations, minority groups, and representatives from the low-income areas and groups to be served.

How to Organize Community Action Program Sponsoring Groups:

Invite interested community leaders and organizations to a "discussion meeting." Discuss needs and explain in detail the provisions governing the development and conduct of Community Action Programs. Your county extension agent and other representatives of State and Federal agencies can help do this. If needed, ask for technical assistance from your State Extension Service, your State "Office of Economic Opportunity," or the Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.

At the first meeting, the group may wish to elect a temporary steering committee to serve as a nucleus in developing interest and participation among the community at large. The steering committee also could provide leadership in organizing a sponsoring group broadly representative of the



Program development funds may be used for hiring a director and other needed staff members to direct the work of the Community Action Program. Financial assistance also is available for carrying out a wide range of projects sponsored by the Community Action Program. Many of these projects can utilize the services and financial assistance available from other government agencies as well as private organizations.

Where to Get Help:

Financial assistance for the development of Community Action Programs is available under Section 204, Title II-A, of the Economic Opportunity Act. Under Section 205, grants are made for carrying out specific action projects or "components" of a Community Action Program.

The Federal government will provide up to 90 percent of the cost of developing and conducting Community Action Programs until August 20, 1966. Very poor communities—with per capita incomes under \$750 per year—may receive grants of more than 90 percent.

For more information or assistance in starting a Community Action Program, contact your local county extension agents, other Federal government agencies, your State Extension Services, your State "Office of Economic Opportunity," or the Office of Economic Opportunity, 1200 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

**REMEMBER . . .
COMMUNITY ACTION IS THE KEY TO
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT!**

Financial and Technical Assistance: